









USER'S GUIDE AND INFORMATION

Trip Booking

403 329 - 6464

LA Transit and ACCESS-A- Ride Office

619 – 4th Avenue North Lethbridge T1H 0K4

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City of Lethbridge

WELCOME TO ACCESS-A-RIDE...

ACCESS-A-Ride is a City of Lethbridge service for people who are unable to use the regular public transit service with safety and dignity.

ACCESS-A-Ride is a shared ride public transportation service that operates within the City of Lethbridge, it is not a direct ride service. Booking and scheduling decisions are made to allow as many riders as possible to use the system while staying within our budgetary guidelines.

The cost of operating ACCESS-A-Ride is offset by fares collected from users, with the

operating deficit being funded by the City of Lethbridge.

Service is provided within Lethbridge on a shared-ride "accessible door to accessible door" basis, providing a safe and secure trip from origin to destination. At no time do our drivers enter a client's home. If a client requires help at home to enable them to be ready to go when ACCESS-A-Ride arrives it is the responsibility of the family or caregivers to make sure they have the assistance needed.

Abuse of service privileges and /or ignoring the Passenger Code of Conduct shall be grounds for the temporary or permanent cancellation of your ACCESS-A-Ride registration (City Bylaw # 2362) which governs activities on public transit.

"It shall be unlawful for any person to fight, swear, use insulting or obscene language, smoke, split or engage in unseemly or disorderly conduct in any of the buses of the City of Lethbridge". Smoking is prohibited on buses in accordance with City Bylaws.

ACCESSIBLE ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

The Accessible Advocacy Committee provides advice to Lethbridge Transit in the development of transportation policies and programs that affect persons with disabilities. The advocacy committee is comprised of three customers, four stakeholder or agency representatives, and one City of Lethbridge Transit department representative.

For information on the Accessible Advocacy Committee: Call ACCESS-A-Ride Customer Care 403 – 329-6464 or email us at: aar@lethbridge.ca



ACCESS-A-RIDE REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY

Eligible clients must register before they can begin booking trips on ACCESS-A-Ride

The registration is in two parts; a personal information application and a medical assessment that must be completed by a physician, occupational therapist, or physical therapist.

There is no registration fee, but you must meet the eligibility requirements and you are responsible for any charge for completing any medical requirements. Registration is evaluated on an **annual basis**. When you call to register, the following process takes place:

- An application form is mailed or faxed to you and is available online at: www.lethbridge.ca or aar@lethbridge.ca
- The form must be legible, completed fully and signed by a qualified health care practitioner and returned to ACCESS-A-Ride.
- Once the application is received with all the necessary information completed, it will be processed within two weeks.

o If the applicant meets eligibility requirements, a registration number will be issued.

A confirmation letter will be sent to all customers after their registration has **been** approved or denied.

If your registration is denied by ACCESS-A-Ride there is an independent appeal process that you may access if you choose. Call the general information and inquires number 403 - 329 - 6464 for information to access the appeal process or send a letter to Lethbridge Transit Attention Chairman of the Accessible Advocacy Committee 619 - 4th Ave North T1H 0K4 to request a formal review. The decision of the committee is final.

Change of Information

Please contact us with any changes to your registration information; address, emergency contact person, phone numbers or mobility aid.

Up to date information is needed to provide the best and safest service for your scheduled trips.



ACCESS-A-RIDE HOURS

Operating Hours

Monday thru Saturday 7:00 am – 10:30 pm

Sunday 8:00 am – 10:30 pm

Holidays 7:00 am - 7:00 pm

ACCESS-A-Ride automatically cancels subscription trips on all statutory holidays. (Excluding trips for dialysis treatment) If you require your regular trip, please call up to seven days in advance to have your trip to book your trip.

Booking trips for statutory holidays are done in the normal seven day travel window with the exception of Christmas Day Trips as a special service to customers bookings for Christmas Day can be booked starting Dec 1st.



Booking Trips and Customer Care Centre Hours

(Trip booking) 403 – 329 – 6464

7:30 am - 3:30 pm Monday thru Friday

(effective August 1, 2010)

General Information and inquiries

(registrations, commendations and concerns)

403 - 329 - 6464

7:30 am - 4:30 pm Monday thru Friday

FARES

(Subject to Change)

\$2.25 cash fare (exact change is required) or AAR token

Starting January 1, 2011 Fare will be \$2.50

How to Book your trip

Step 1: Call **403 - 329 - 6464**

Customers are booked on a first come, first served basis. Bookings may be made no more than 7 days in advance, and by 3:30 pm the day before you are requesting your trip.

Step 2: Have the following information ready:

O Your name and ID number

- Specify what type of trip you will be making medical, social, work etc
- Whether an attendant or companion will accompany you and any mobility aid, (such as wheelchair or scooter) you will be using
- The day and time you want to be picked up
- The exact street address and building name of your destination. In the case of a location with more than one entrance, which entrance you would prefer to be waiting at.
- The pickup time of your return trip.

• The exact location of your pick up point.

Step 3: Confirm your pick up date, time and location

If ACCESS-A-Ride cannot find you a trip you may be placed on a wait list, however it is YOUR responsibility to confirm or cancel your ride.

Note: ACCESS-A-Ride is not intended to provide an emergency medical service. If you are experiencing an emergency, call 911 to request assistance.





SUBSCRIPTION TRIPS

If you take the same trip daily for a minimum of 4 weeks for dialysis, work, post-secondary

education, or medical therapy, a subscription trip may be booked based on service availability.

Once approved, a subscription trip is set up on a master schedule and is provided as long as it is required, however, booked times may need to be adjusted to accommodate additional subscription trip clients. "A subscription trips is not meant to modified"

Please note that subscription trips are provided only if there is available service and are automatically cancelled on holidays. If you require a subscription trip on a holiday a regular booking will have to be made.

All other trips that you require must be booked as a regular booking and are subject to the same conditions: Customers are booked on a first come, first served basis. Bookings may be made no more than 7 days in advance and by 3:30 pm the day before you are requesting your trip.

To apply for subscription service

Please call **403 329 – 6464**

Note: If you cancel more than 40% of your subscription trips in a 30 day period, your subscription will be cancelled and you will be required to book trips on a demand basis. After 90 days you may re-apply for a subscription booking.

EARLY / LATE PICK-UP WINDOW AND DRIVERS WAITING PERIOD





On time service and customer ride time is greatly affected by ACCESS-A-Ride having to wait for customers to be ready. Your cooperation by being ready at the start of your pick-up window will improve your own

service quality as well as the service quality for your fellow travellers.

ACCESS-A-Ride has a service standard of a 10 minute early/late window, which means your bus could arrive to pick you up as much as ten minutes prior to or ten minutes after your scheduled time. Upon arrival the driver will make a reasonable attempt to locate the client by ringing the doorbell or buzzer if provided. If contact is made drivers will wait a reasonable amount of time for the customer, if no activity is seen within 5 minutes of arrival or contact, drivers must continue on route to maintain service for other clients.

Drivers do not search buildings or other areas for passengers not present at the outside

door during the scheduled pick-up window. Please ensure the building is open or, if you have someone meeting you, make sure they are available at the earliest drop-off time. You need to be at the exterior set of accessible doors at the beginning of your pick-up window (i.e. the door closest to the street).



ACCESS-A-RIDE CUSTOMER SERVICE



Commendations and Suggestions

If you are happy with the service you are getting from our ACCESS-A-Ride drivers and staff, let us know by calling in a commendation! We are also interested in any suggestions or comments you have about ACCESS-A-Ride. Call ACCESS-A-Ride customer care 403 – 329 – 6464 or email us at: *aar@lethbridge.ca*

Community Relations

ACCESS-A-Ride provides information seminars on Lethbridge Transit services to interested organizations, free of charge. Information presented includes how ACCESS-A-Ride operates, registration, and booking procedures as well as suggestions for making better use of the system in times of increased demand. As well Lethbridge Transit routes, services and other alternatives are covered. Call ACCESS-A-Ride customer care 403 - 329 - 6464 or email us at: aar@lethbridge.ca

Problem with your ride

ACCESS-A-Ride listens to customer concerns, and a considerable time is spent in the investigation and resolve service issues. Call ACCESS-A-Ride customer care 403 – 329 – 6464 or email us at: aar@lethbridge.ca

Privacy

ACCESS-A-Ride application information is collected under the authority of Section 33(c)

of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and will be used by ACCESS-A-Ride for processing of the application form and to determine eligibility for the service. Information collected may also be used by Lethbridge Transit for statistical, research, transit training purposes, or to improve service.

Visitor Service

Persons with disabilities visiting Lethbridge may be provided with temporary visitor registration upon contacting ACCESS-A-Ride and completing a temporary registration form.

ACCESS-A-RIDE DRIVER ASSISTANCE

Drivers are able to:

- Operate power lifts and ramps on their vehicle, secure wheelchairs and scooters to the floor of the vehicle using the vehicle restraint system.
- Assist customers with lap/shoulder straps and belts.
- o Assist customers on and off vehicles.
- Assist customers between the vehicle and the inside of the first exterior set of accessible doors at the place of origin and/or destination. An accessible door

is an outside door with no more than one step.

Drivers are not able to:

- O Assist customers in climbing more than one step.
- Make any repairs or adjustments to your equipment.
- O Not transfer customers from a wheelchair or mobility device to any kind of lift device. Customers must have an attendant or caregiver who will assist them if required.
- o Help with parcels or baggage, so limit your possessions to those that you can

- carry or travel with an attendant who can assist you.
- Packages must be handled by yourself and should only be the amount that you can carry and or store on your lap. Bags cannot be stored in the aisle of the bus.
- Enter your premises under any circumstances (including garages).
- Lock any doors to your premises on your behalf.
- O Take your equipment down the steps and then go back up for you. All equipment must be at ground level when the driver arrives.



PASSENGER SAFETY

Seat Belts and Securement

ACCESS-A-Ride is dedicated to the safety of every passenger on every trip. To ensure the safety of both passengers and drivers, temporary or portable ramps are not acceptable.

All passengers must wear the supplied seat belts as required by law, while being transported by ACCESS-A-Ride. If for medical reasons, you are not able to use the recommended restraint system while travelling on ACCESS-A-Ride, we require a written exemption (signed by a qualified health care practitioner familiar with your case) on your file, which must be updated annually.

All mobility aids must be secured using the restraint systems provided as, **Drivers will** not provide service to anyone who is not secured.

Clients should be secured to their mobility aid if required.



Infants and Small Children

Due to Alberta Traffic Safety Act regarding child car seats and securement infants and or small children who are less than 18 kg, or 40 lbs or under the age of six (6) no longer can be accommodated on ACCESS-A-Ride as passengers. Children over the age of six (6) or 40lbs can ride ACCESS-A-Ride as long as they are secured with the vehicle seat belt and wearing it correctly.



Mobility Equipment Guidelines

For the safety of all passengers, all wheelchairs and scooters must meet specific size, weight and safety guidelines.

All mobility aids must be kept clean and in good repair at all times or they will not be allowed on ACCESS-A-Ride.

If ACCESS-A-Ride cannot properly secure your mobility aid, we will not be able to provide you with service using that mobility aid.

Please note:

 Do not overload walkers or wheelchairs with added weight and

- additional packages this makes it difficult for drivers to assist you in a safe manner and reduce capacity for other passengers
- Combined weight of the chair (or scooter) and passenger cannot exceed 750 lbs (340 kg)
- Maximum base dimensions for wheelchairs, walkers, scooter: 30 X 50 inches (76 X 127 cm) – equipment larger than this cannot be accommodated
- o Wheelchairs must have escort handles
- Wheelchairs and scooters must have functioning brakes

- No flags or other projections are permitted
- Tie-downs must be securely fastened to the frame of the scooter
- Scooters may need an attachment installed so they can be secured safely to the floor of the ACCESS-A-Ride vehicle





SERVICE STANDARDS AND POLICIES

Personal Care Attendants

Due to heavy demands on the service and financial constraints, ACCESS-A-Ride encourages registrants to have their escorts find other means of transportation instead of riding on the ACCESS-A-Ride vehicle whenever possible.

A mandatory attendant may be assigned if the ACCESS-A-Ride registrant requires individual assistance on the vehicle due to a medical condition and/or behavioural concerns. One attendant is then allowed and may travel at no

charge to assist or attend to the customer during their trip (medical issues). Registrants displaying unacceptable behaviour that affects other passengers and/or the driver will be required to ride with an attendant at all times.

If the registrant cannot be left alone and no one is available when the vehicle arrives to receive the registrant, the registrant will have "mandatory attendant" status assigned by ACCESS-A-Ride administration and they will have to ride with someone for all their trips.

If space is available one friend or family member, not required as an attendant, may ride with the registered customer but must pay the regular cash fare. Space for the attendant, friend or family member must be reserved at the time of booking.

"Door to door policy"

Service is provided from "accessible door to accessible door". For the safety of both the customer and the driver, drivers will not take mobility aids up or down more than one step. It is the customer's responsibility to provide a ramp where there is more than one step.

All locations served by ACCESS-A-Ride must be accessible. ACCESS-A-Ride defines accessibility as "being no more than one step". All locations must be kept free of snow and ice or ACCESS-A-Ride will not be able to provide service.

Hand-over to Caregiver Policy (Hand to Hand)

This policy applies to customers being met by a caregiver at their destination it is assumed that it is unsafe to leave the customer unattended. The status is identified by the customer or their caregiver during the registration process.

The late arrival of the caregiver causes disruption in the service resulting in drivers running late and inconveniences to other customers, therefore please be on time.

o If after at the designated drop off location, the vehicle waits for a period of more than five (5) minutes for the

- caregiver, the customer will receive a warning.
- o If a second occurrence takes place within a three month period, a two day suspension will be issued.
- If a third occurrence takes place within a three month period the customer will be required to have a personal care attendant as a condition of service.



Cancellations/No shows

Unexpected occurrences such as illness, family emergencies etc., happen to everyone occasionally and disrupt our daily routine. We understand these circumstances arise. Ride cancellations should be made as early as possible. This will allow the trip time to be used by another customer who is in need of a trip. All cancellations and other trip changes such as pick-up times and destinations are to be made through the ACCESS-A-Ride office and not the drivers.

Trips cancelled less than 30 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time are recorded as a no-show.



To cancel your trip - Phone 403 - 329 - 6464

If you fail to cancel a scheduled trip in advance you will be considered a no-show. Please remember that the driver can only wait five (5) minutes upon arrival within your scheduled pick-up time frame because of other client commitments. After this period has lapsed and there is no indication that you are coming to the pickup location, your trip

will be considered a no show, please remember that your return trip will be automatically cancelled due to your no show.

Customers who repeatedly cancel trips at the last minute or are no-shows may be subject to a **SUSPENSION OF SERVICE.**

Excessive frequency of these late cancellations will result in the following policy actions:

 If three late cancellations or noshows occur in any 60 - day period, a letter of warning will be issued to the customer.

- If six late cancellations or no-shows occur in any 90-day period, a 2-day suspension of service will be imposed. A letter of warning explaining the suspension will also be issued to the customer.
- If nine late cancellations or noshows occur in any 120-day period, a 1-week suspension of service will be imposed. A letter of warning explaining the suspension will also be issued to the customer. The suspension will be imposed for a consecutive seven-day period.
- If twelve or more late cancellations or no-shows occur in any 120-day

period, ACCESS-A-Ride will review the customer's need for continued service. Service may be discontinued if a satisfactory arrangement to avoid cancellations cannot be reached.

Service suspensions will be imposed on days the customer frequently travels on, or on days where the demand for ACCESS-A-Ride services is high. Suspensions will apply to the entire client base, no exceptions.

Abuse of the service privileges and/or ignoring the passenger code of conduct shall be grounds for the temporary or

permanent cancellation of your ACCESS-A-Ride eligibility.

Service suspension appeals:

Call the general information and inquires number 403 - 329 - 6464 for information to access the appeal process or send a letter to Lethbridge Transit Attention Chairman of the Accessible Advocacy Committee 619 - 4th Ave N T1H 0K4 to request a formal review. The decision of the committee is final.



Assistance Animals

Certified assistance animals are allowed on Lethbridge Transit and ACCESS-A-Ride vehicles to assist customers with visual, hearing or physical disabilities. Owners of assistance animals must have a letter or certificate on file with ACCESS-A-Ride which verifies that the animal has been trained by a recognized school.



Pets on ACCESS-A-Ride

Pets are welcome on all Lethbridge Access-A-Ride buses under the following guidelines:

- Only small fur-bearing and feathered pets contained in secure, clean, handheld cages are permitted on the buses.
- The cage should be appropriate to the pet's size.
- Cages must be small enough to fit on the owner's lap.
- One hand-held cage per passenger.
- Passengers must hold onto their cages at all times and are responsible for the safety of their pets. (If there is room on the bus, cages may be placed beside you on the floor but the cage should

- not block the aisle or restrict other passengers.)
- Your operator may refuse a trip if your pet poses a health or safety risk, or if it misbehaves.
- O When the bus is busy there may not be room for your pet. To better plan your trip; please call Access-A-Ride at (403) 329 6464 to find out which trips tend to be busy.

Assignment of Vehicles

Vehicles are assigned to provide ACCESS-A-Ride service in the most cost effective vehicle that meets your particular travel requirements. We are unable to accommodate specific

vehicle type requests or seating location requests.



Trip Adjustments

During your trip on ACCESS-A-Ride, you may decide that you would like to be dropped off at your destination early or want to change your destination. With the approval of the dispatch office the drivers may be able to accommodate these requests under certain conditions. ACCESS-A-Ride service standards must be maintained and others customers cannot be affected negatively.

Note: If you change your trip destination, and you have another ACCESS-A-Ride pick-up you must find your own way back to the original pick-up location as the returning vehicle will have a different schedule and different customers.

Travel Time

While all attempts are made to minimize travel time, your ride will take about the same amount of time as a regular transit bus ride. The service standard is that 60% of all rides should be completed within 30 minutes and 90% within 45 minutes. On-time service and customer ride time is greatly affected by ACCESS-A-Ride having to wait for customers to be ready when they arrive. Your cooperation by being ready at the start of your pick-up window will improve your own service quality as well as the service quality for your fellow travellers.

GROUP BOOKINGS

Customers who wish to book a group trip must be prepared to share a vehicle with the other passengers. Pick-up and drop-off times and destinations of all passengers will be considered booked when scheduling the trips.

To ensure service is available to as many customers as possible, no more than four (4) wheelchairs can be booked in any one group. Group bookings may be made anytime within a seven (7) day period in advance of the trip and no less than twenty four (24) hours. Group trips are subject to space availability. Group bookings that no show or do not cancel in a timely manner will mean that

future group bookings for the institution involved may be denied or accessed a cancellation fee.

Groups wishing to book more than seven(7)day in advance will be considered a charter and charter rates will apply if the charter is cancelled less than twenty four (24)in advance of date booked a cancellation fees will charged as per the charter policy.



ACCESSIBLE LOW FLOOR BUS-

LA TRANSIT SERVICE



If we are unable to accommodate your trip request, you may wish to use the City of Lethbridge Transit Services' accessible low floor buses, which operate on all bus routes. Low Floor Service allows many more people with reduced mobility the freedom and independence of using public transit services.

What's different about Low-Floor Buses (LFB)?

The main difference with a Low Floor Bus is that there are No Steps to go up and down at the front and rear doors. The front entrance is also equipped with a "Kneeling" feature which, upon request, lowers the front step to the curb height. In addition, the bus is equipped with a driver-controlled retractable

fold-out ramp, which makes for virtually flat entrance into the bus.

Boarding, Securement and Exiting

It is important that boarding, securing and exiting the bus be completed as quickly as possible. The "courtesy seating" area at the front of the bus for persons with reduced mobility including seniors, or those using mobility aids, is available on a first come first served basis. Low Floor Buses can accommodate up to two (2) persons in mobility devices.

If the bus is full or is already carrying two (2) customers who use a mobility device, the

driver may not be able to pick up another customer with the same requirements.

Important:

Passengers using a mobility aid on designated Low Floor Buses are required to board independently and position their mobility aid inside the bus or bring an attendant to assist them.

The Securement belt system provided on the bus is mandatory and Transit drivers will assist with attaching and removing the Securement system. For safety reasons, service will be denied if the securement belt is refused. Persons with disabilities, who cannot independently board the bus, approach the

seating area, position their mobility aid and exit the bus must be accompanied with an attendant who will assume the responsibilities. Your regular bus fare covers both you and your attendant.

Customers travelling in a mobility device will notice a yellow touch strip on the edge of the flip-seats. When this strip is pushed the chime will ring twice to indicate to the driver that a person in a mobility device wishes to exit.

Due to vehicle design constraints, the maximum total size of a mobility device that can be accommodated on a Low Floor Bus is **30 inches wide by 50 inches long** (including attachments).

Persons using crutches, walkers or other mobility aids are also requested to fold or stow the aid in a safe place out the way of other customers.



ACCESS-A-RIDE DEFINITIONS



Escort: A fare paying companion travelling on ACCESS-A-Ride with an ACCESS-A-Ride registrant.

Mandatory Attendant: A companion who is required to travel with an ACCESS-A-Ride registrant on every trip for medical or behavioural issues or safety reasons i.e. the

client cannot be left unattended at their destinations.

Door to Door: Is the first exterior set of accessible doors at the place of origin and/or destination and the clients may be left unattended. An accessible door is an outside door with no more than one step. The status is identified by the customer or their caregiver during the registration process.

Hand to Hand:

Customers must be met by a caregiver at their destination as it is unsafe to leave the customer unattended. Refer to the Hand to Caregiver Policy.

The status is identified by the customer or their caregiver during the registration process.

No-Show: A trip that is not needed but is cancelled less than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up, or cancelled at the door when the drivers arrives, or the customer is not ready at the door for the scheduled pick up.

Off-Peak Periods: The time periods outside of the designated peak periods. There are usually more trips available during these times.

Peak Periods: The time between 0700 and 9:45 am and from 2:30 and 4:30 pm on

weekdays are considered peak periods as more trips are requested during these times.

Un-accommodated Booking: If ACCESS-A-Ride is unable to accommodate a client's request for a trip booking, the booking is classified as un-accommodated booking.

Wait List: If ACCESS-A-Ride cannot find you a trip you may be placed on a wait list, however it is YOUR responsibility to confirm or cancel your ride.

Securement System: Correct use of a securement safety system (mobility aids) and seat belt assemblies (passenger) is mandatory and a condition of use while traveling.

TYPES OF TRIPS

Education: Trips to and from an educational program for Public, Separate, Private school programs or an accredited post secondary educational institution.

Medical: Trips to and from medical appointments.

- o Adult day support
- o Chemo/radiation treatment
- o Dialysis and related appointments
- Medical facilities: hospital clinics, dentists

 Physio, occupational and speech therapies

Personal: Trips taken for personal reasons

Vocational: Trips to and from facilities for the purpose of learning work skills

Work: Trips to and from a location for the purpose of working including volunteer work.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How will I know which type of vehicle will pick me up?

A: ACCESS-A-Ride is unable to inform you which type of vehicle will pick you up.

Ambulatory customers and those who can safely transfer from a folding manual chair to a seat should be prepared for any type of vehicle.

Q: I am unable to climb the stairs of the bus, what options do I have?

A: Ambulatory (walking) customers can ride up the lift of the bus with the driver.

Q: Can I use my Lethbridge Transit bus pass for ACCESS-A-Ride trips.

A: No, only cash fares or ACCESS-A-Ride tokens are accepted

Q: My doctor needs to see me today. Can I book a trip for today?

A: Same day trips are very limited and will be made only if space is available and you have no other means of transportation.

Q: My husband and I are both registered can we travel as each other's attendants?

A: If you are travelling together, you each need to make a trip request and pay a fare.

Q: Does the same vehicle pick me up?

A: You will likely have different drivers and vehicles pick you up for each trip.

Q: I am going somewhere with more than one entrance/exit where do I meet my ride?

A: ACCESS-A-Ride has designated pick up doors usually the most accessible location. When making your trip booking confirm which entrance/exit you will be drop off or picked up from.

